

Message Text

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FOR HODDING CARTER FROM TRATTNER

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: EVENING PRESS SUMMARY, APRIL 20, 1978

NO. 14

1. WIRES

AP --SCHWEID FROM MOSCOW

LEAD: "SECSTATE VANCE AND SOVIET LEADERS OPENED ARMS TALKS
IN THE KREMLIN TODAY ON A CONCILIATORY NOTE BUT WITH AN
AMERICAN WARNING OF 'COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT PROBLEMS AHEAD.'"

OTHER POINTS:

--NEITHER LEADER EXPECTS A DRAMATIC BREAKTHROUGH ON SALT
BUT THE ATMOSPHERE WAS MORE HOPEFUL THAN LAST SPRING.

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--FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THREE YEARS, THE SOVIET DELEGATION
INCLUDES A HIGH-RANKING MILITARY EXPERT.

--HODDING CARTER DESCRIBED THE FIRST ROUND AS "BUSINESSLIKE"
WITH THE TWO LEADERS "SETTING THE STAGE WITH THE ISSUES
THEY SEE AS REMAINING IN THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS."

--ANALYSTS SAY THE HIGH STAKES MAKE VANCE'S VISIT A TURNING POINT IN SALT SINCE FAILURE TO BREAK THE DEADLOCK MIGHT UNDO THE WHOLE NEGOTIATING PROCESS.

REUTER -- GUTMAN FROM MOSCOW

LEAD: "THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION OPENED WHAT BOTH CALLED AN EXCEPTIONALLY IMPORTANT ROUND OF TALKS TODAY AMID EXPRESSIONS OF HOPE FOR SERIOUS PROGRESS TOWARD A NEW STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TREATY."

OTHER POINTS:

--VANCE AND GROMYKO MET FOR MORE THAN THREE HOURS WITH "MORE THAN ONE MEETING" TO COME. HODDING CARTER DESCRIBED THE MEETING AS BUSINESSLIKE.

--COMMUNIST SOURCES SAID VANCE CRITICIZED SOVIET POLICY IN AFRICA DURING HIS PRESENTATION. GROMYKO SAID US POLICY WAS INCONSISTENT.

--AT LUNCH THE TWO EXPRESSED HOPES FOR POSITIVE RESULTS.

--PRESENCE OF SOVIET MISSILE EXPERT WAS SEEN AS A POSITIVE SIGN. COMMUNIST SOURCES SAID HIS INCLUSION WAS INTENDED TO OFFSET CONCERNS BY SOVIET MILITARY.
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--VANCE DISCARDED HIS PREPARED TOAST WHEN INFORMED GROMYKO DID NOT INTEND TO GIVE SUBSTANTIVE TOAST.

--GUTMAN REPEATS IRINA MCCLELLAN INCIDENT.

UPI -- ANDERSON FROM MOSCOW

LEAD: "STATE VANCE THURSDAY OPENED 'EXCEPTIONALLY IMPORTANT' STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS IN THE KREMLIN WHICH FOR THE FIRST TIME IN FOUR YEARS WERE ATTENDED BY A TOP SOVIET MILITARY OFFICIAL."

OTHER POINTS:

--VANCE AND GROMYKO PRESENTED THEIR PREPARED OPENING STATEMENTS DESCRIBING THEIR POSITIONS AT THE FIRST MEETING.

--US SOURCES CONSIDERED THE PRESENCE OF DEP DEF MINISTER OGARKOV AS INDICATION THAT THE SOVIETS ARE PREPARED TO MAKE MAJOR DECISIONS.

--US NEGOTIATORS SAID DIFFERENCES OVER BACKFIRE AND DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW GENERATION OF MISSILES MUST BE RESOLVED.

--IN TOASTS BOTH VANCE AND GROMYKO STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TALKS AND HOPED FOR PROGRESS.

--ANDERSON REPEATS IRINA MCCLELLAN INCIDENT.

2. NEWSPAPERS

HERALD-AMERICAN -- WALLACH FROM MOSCOW

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LEAD: SECSTATE VANCE BEGAN CRUCIAL TALKS WITH SOVIET LEADERS YESTERDAY AIMED AT MAKING ENOUGH PROGRESS TOWARD A NEW STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATIONS TREATY TO ASSURE A LATE SUMMER SUMMIT" BETWEEN BREZHNEV AND CARTER.

OTHER POINTS:

--SINCE VANCE "OBVIOUSLY AWARE OF THE SHARP SETBACK TO U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS THAT RESULTED FROM HIS LAST TRIP" TO MOSCOW, "VANCE DELIBERATELY SET MODEST GOALS FOR HIS FOUR-DAY STAY, CAUTIONING IN HIS ARRIVAL STATEMENT THAT 'COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT PROBLEMS REMAIN.'

--THE ATMOSPHERE WAS "DECIDEDLY UPBEAT", WITH GROMYKO AND WIFE "ALL SMILES AS THEY WELCOMED VANCE AND HIS WIFE TO THE BREEZY SOVIET CAPITAL."

--US OFFICIALS WERE ELATED BY SENATE APPROVAL OF PANAMA CANAL TREATY "AND VOLUNTEERED THAT ALTHOUGH IT WAS A 'BRUISING BATTLE' FOR RATIFICATION, THE SOVIETS COULD NOT HELP BEING IMPRESSED BY CARTER'S LEGISLATIVE VICTORY."

--"THE OBVIOUS HOPE WAS THAT SOVIET LEADERS WOULD READ CARTER'S WILLINGNESS" TO FIGHT FOR THE TREATIES "AS A SIGN HE WILL DO THE SAME FOR A GOOD, VERIFIABLE NUCLEAR ARMS TREATY AND THEREFORE BE MORE WILLING TO MAKE ESSENTIAL COMPROMISES."

--US OFFICIALS IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING REMAINING OBSTACLES TO AN AGREEMENT: (1) A FORMULA ON THE SOVIET BACKFIRE BOMBER - VANCE AIDES "HINTING THAT THE DRAFTING OF A WRITTEN UNDERSTANDING ON THIS ISSUE PROBABLY WILL BE LEFT FOR THE CARTER-BREZHNEV SUMMIT. (2) PERSUADING THE SOVIETS
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THAT US WILL NOT ATTEMPT "TO CIRCUMVENT THE TREATY BY PROVIDING CRUISE MISSILE TECHNOLOGY" TO NATO WHILE

RETAINING THE "RIGHT TO SHARE CRUISE TECHNOLOGY UP TO THE RANGE LIMITATIONS PERMITTED BY THE TREATY." (3) WHETHER SOVIETS INTEND TO FOREGO DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW GENERATION OF HEAVY MISSILES - INCLUDING THE SS-20. (4) RESOLVING THE CONTROVERSY OVER HOW MANY NUCLEAR DELIVERY SYSTEMS THE SUPERPOWERS WILL BE PERMITTED TO MAINTAIN BY 1985.

LA TIMES -- NO JOHNSTON

3. TV NETWORKS

NBC -- ANCHORMAN CHANCELLOR: IN MOSCOW SECSTATE VANCE AND SOVIET LEADERS OPENED TALKS ON A NEW NUCLEAR WEAPONS AGREEMENT. THE AMERICANS SAID THERE WERE A LOT OF COMPLEX AND DIFFICULT PROBLEMS INVOLVED.

ABC -- DUNSMORE FROM MOSCOW: AS HE WENT INTO THESE FIRST SESSIONS TODAY, SECSTATE VANCE WAS VERY MUCH AWARE THAT THE FAILURE OF HIS FIRST MOSCOW TRIP HAD SET A NEGATIVE TONE FOR US-SOVIET RELATIONS UNDER THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION. TODAY SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO REPRESENTED THE RUSSIANS. PRES. BREZHNEV IS EXPECTED TO JOIN IN LATER. AS THE TALKS BEGAN, GROMYKO SAID THAT HE HOPED THAT THERE WOULD BE PROGRESS IN THESE STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATIONS TALKS. VANCE EXPRESSED THE SAME HOPE AS BOTH SIDES APPEAR TO AGREE THAT THE FUTURE OF THE US-SOVIET RELATIONSHIP DEPENDS ON ACHIEVING A NEW SALT AGREEMENT. EARLIER THIS MONTH THE SOVIETS ACCUSED THE US OF FOOT DRAGGING AND VACILLATING ON A NEW ARMS AGREEMENT. BUT THERE WERE NO SUCH CRITICISMS TODAY. AND THE US DESCRIBED THE ATMOSPHERE AS GOOD. IT IS TOO EARLY TO PREDICT THE OUTCOME OF WHAT IS GOING TO BE GOING ON BEHIND THE KREMLIN WALL FOR THREE WHOLE DAYS BUT IT CAN

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BE SAID THAT THINGS HAVE GOTTEN OFF TO A GOOD START. CHRISTOPHER

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